

1: Titiev E-5 (1948) 1951 SG4 Araucanians SG4  
Mapuche-Huilliche

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MISCHA TITIEV

[759] A parturient woman is usually attended by a midwife or a  
844 machi, her own husband, and, occasionally, one other man or woman. She is given a sturdy stick and encouraged to hold it and to walk up and down as long as she can. During labor she takes draughts of water, sometimes mixed with ginger. When parturition is about to occur, the mother assumes a kneeling position on a sheepskin mat large enough to catch whatever matter may be discharged incidental to birth. If help is needed a strong man or woman may grasp the patient and press down on her abdomen. It is thought that particular care must be taken with women having their first babies to make sure that the child is guided through the proper orifice.

As soon as birth has taken place the attendant midwife or machi heats a special instrument, *katrüf dowe* ("umbilical cord cutter"), made of sharp metal, formerly of stone. With this instrument, which is reserved for this one use, she severs the cord, then ties the knot. Upon the expulsion of the afterbirth the husband is directed to gather up the sheepskin on which accouchement occurred, and to be sure that it contains every particle of solid and fluid substance that was shed at the confinement. Should anything have fallen to the ground, the husband carefully scrapes it up and puts it into the sheepskin. The mat and its contents are then secretly buried in a deep hole, dug in virgin soil at an unfrequented spot. A stone or a heavy piece of wood may be used as a weight to prevent animals from getting at the buried bundle. Secrecy is observed for fear of witches or of jealous people, such as lovers or women who may want the recently delivered mother for a daughter-in-law.

● 846 Soon after a delivery has been safely accomplished, all soiled garments and bedding are carefully laundered in a stream. Mother and child are bathed in a mixture of water and the fragrant leaves of plants such as *foye*,<sup>8</sup> *ifulköñ*,<sup>9</sup> or *natsuñ*.<sup>10</sup> Sometimes, if a daughter has just been born, the mother may

<sup>8</sup> *Foye* is the cinnamon tree which is called *canelo* in Spanish. It is very sacred to the Araucanians and is used in a wide range of religious contexts.

<sup>9</sup> Augusta (1916, I: 65) identified this plant as *Vestia lycioides*.

<sup>10</sup> Identified as *Solanum Gayanum* Remy, family Solanaceae, in Augusta (*op. cit.*, p. 146).

ARAUCANIAN CULTURE IN TRANSITION

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Sometimes, if a daughter has just been born, the mother may be given a strong and bitter drink made from the leaves either of the *foye* or *fol-o*.<sup>11</sup> The idea seems to be that the beverage is so powerful that it will strengthen the woman and enable her to bear a son next time. [278]

In a sense the Araucanians consider that a newly born infant is on trial; that is, before devoting themselves to it wholeheartedly, they want some assurance that it is sound enough to survive. As a combination test of weakness and remedy for it the baby may be given a drink of cold water, mixed with the juice of the *refu* plant.<sup>12</sup> A belief prevails that this drink will either make the child stronger by cleansing its stomach and forcing it to urinate, or cause it to die; but my informant admitted that he had never heard of an infant that had actually perished from the treatment. Sometimes, too, parents perform a little rite designed to give strength to a child. Early in the morning after a night when the moon is full, they hold the baby over the fire in their own home. The father takes the feet, and the mother holds the head. Gently they stretch the infant, praying that it may grow and be strong. 854

A lying-in period that may extend to ten days or two weeks follows confinement. When the mother feels herself fully recovered, she takes a bath in water made fragrant with the leaves of aromatic plants. Not until a woman has thus announced her recovery are her other young offspring free to see her and the baby at close range. For immature children to approach their recently delivered mother too soon is thought to be dangerous, causing boys to be weaklings and girls to be so enfeebled that they will die in childbirth when their time comes. No set date is fixed for the resumption of marital relations. Each couple makes its own arrangements after the wife feels that she has returned to normal health and activity.<sup>13</sup> [784] [833]

<sup>11</sup> *Fole* is identified in Augusta (*op. cit.*, p. 50) as *Boldoa fragrans*. Whisky or cognac is sometimes substituted nowadays for the native beverage.

<sup>12</sup> Augusta (*op. cit.*, p. 51) failed to identify *refu*, but described it as a short shrub with yellow flowers and small round leaves.

<sup>13</sup> Latham (1909, p. 360) said that cohabitation is not resumed until a child "has cut all its teeth." Cooper (1946, p. 733) mentioned abstinence

provide the purchase price, and to maintain them and their families. Formerly it was common for a chief of importance to have as many as twenty, but now the number rarely passes four or five. The first wife (*onen domuche*) has, however, a certain moral ascendancy over the others (*man domuche*). As a general rule there is little jealousy among the wives, who take it in turns, either daily or weekly, to attend to the personal wants of the husband, as also in sexual intercourse. It is probable that formerly exogamous customs prevailed, but at present the only restrictions imposed are that a man may not marry his mother or sister. What seems to indicate that exogamy was an ancient practice among these Indians, is the fact that all marriage ceremonies begin with the pretended rape, or carrying off of the bride, which of late years has given way to a simple elopement, unless the bride be unwilling, when the older custom is resorted to. The marriage ceremony consists of two parts; the rape (*levantun*), and the payment (*marun*). Having arranged the price with the father or eldest brother of the girl, the bridegroom arranges the details of the rape. He calls together his male relations, and while one of them goes to the bride's house on some pretext or other, the rest make a sudden attack on the dwelling. This is energetically resisted by all the womenfolk, the men of the household remaining passive spectators. One of the raiders seizes the struggling girl, and none too gently drags her to where the bridegroom is waiting on horseback. Placing her in front of him the latter gallops off to the wood. Here the pair remain for three days, food being taken to them by their friends. After this the bridegroom takes home his bride to the hut he has already prepared for her. This custom of carrying off the bride is only practised in the case of the first wife. A few days later comes the feast of the payment (*marun*), to which all the relatives of both parties are invited. The price paid varies according to the status of the bride. If she is of superior rank, the payment sometimes reaches as high as ten or twelve animals, cows, mares, or sheep; an approximate value of about £12 to £14 sterling. A poor man obtains a wife of his own class at the cost of a few shillings. If a bridegroom cannot pay at once the whole of the price agreed upon, he lives with his father-in-law till the debt is cancelled. Generally he puts the whole of his relations under contribution, and, as this debt is considered one of honour, it is usually paid in a very short time. If it were not paid within a reasonable period, the father could recover his daughter. The husband could only refuse to pay when the wife died prematurely, and could demand the return of the value given if she abandoned her home.

*Marital Customs.*—It was a former custom not to permit a woman to give birth to a child within the precincts of the village, as it was considered to cause infectious diseases. She was driven out, on beginning to feel the labour pains, and retired to the banks of the nearest stream or lake. As soon as the child was born the mother stepped into the water and performed the necessary ablutions, returning afterwards to a small hut constructed for the purpose near the river, which constituted her home. Here she remained a week attended by some

846 compassionate friend. At the end of this time she bathed again, and returned to her own home, where all her relations and friends were assembled to celebrate a feast in honour of the babe. These customs are at present considerably modified, and the birth takes place in the *rucu* itself. The mother takes up a kneeling posture during labour, holding on by a thong fastened to a post. She is attended by her friends, and a midwife (*aputracu*) assists at the birth. The men retire outside the hut and receive with laughter and coarse jokes the complaints of the sufferer and the cries of the newly born. After the birth both mother and babe are bathed.

553 The baptism and naming of the child take place shortly afterwards. Some friend of the father offers himself as godfather (*lacu*), and requests that the babe, if it be a boy, may bear his name, the celebration feast being at his expense. Among other presents he provides a sheep, with the blood of which crosses are made on the forehead and temples of the child. This is an innovation of Christian origin, and dates from the time of the Spanish occupation. In the neighbourhood of the towns and missions the children frequently receive a Christian baptism, and take as names the most common of the calendar, their father's name passing as a surname.

846 A man does not cohabit with his wife after childbirth till the child is weaned, 853 which does not take place till it has cut all its teeth.

428 When a man dies his eldest son inherits his wives, together with his other 587 property, and from that moment takes them to wife himself, save only his mother, who recovers her freedom and may marry again. If he leaves no son, his eldest brother inherits and acquires the same rights. Sometimes the wives are distributed among all the brothers of the deceased in order of priority of marriage, the first married to the eldest brother, etc., or they can recover their liberty on paying to the heir the price they cost.

613 *Totemism*.—Although totemism is not in vogue among this race at the present day, there is reason to suppose that it was so at no late period.

The probability of exogamous marriage customs having formerly existed has already been referred to.

551 The custom, at one time universal, of giving children the names of animals, birds, or inanimate objects seems to indicate that these names might have belonged to the clan totem, especially as even recently it was no uncommon thing to find numerous persons in the same family group with the same name, only modified by some distinguishing adjective, as *Nakuel*, tiger; *Nakuelcolu*, red tiger; *Nakuetripai*, leaping tiger; *Luan*, huanaco; *Mariluan*, ten huanacos; *Lonecoluan*, huanaco's head; *Vila*, snake; *Quilarilu*, three snakes; *Coluwilu*, red snake, etc., etc. These names have gradually changed into surnames, owing to the custom of giving the children other names at baptism.

613 The Araucanos believe they originally descended from the animals whose names they bear, but have no clear idea as to whether this descent was on their mother's or on their father's side, although most of them incline to the former.

728 of the same. The usual speeches were made and agreements concurred in. A white llama was killed, and each headman present consumed a bit of the heart while the *canelos* were anointed with the blood of the llama. A hole was dug in the ground and therein were buried arrows, *tokis*, and other instruments of war. The hole was then filled up and a *canelo* planted over it.

## CANNIBALISM

266 From the accounts left us by González de Nájera (1889, pp. 54, 56), Bascuñan (1863, p. 43), Rosales (1877-78, 1:125), and others, there can be no reasonable doubt that a certain amount of cannibalism in connection with the killing of war prisoners was practiced by the *Araucanians*. As to the purpose, our sources are not clear; magical acquisition of power does not seem indicated. In some cases the captors cut flesh off the living captive, broiled it, and ate it; in other cases they burnt the bones of captives, reduced them to powder, and drank the powder mixed with lime; in still other cases the more common custom, the heart of the captive was cut out, sucked, and bitten into by the headmen and sometimes by others as well, or was cut up into small bits and each ate a bit—as was the common custom with the hearts of sacrificed animals.

Some of our early sources—Oña (canto 2, 1917, p. 86), Fernández (1611, cited by Medina, 1882, p. 217) and Molina (1878 a, p. 253; 1901, p. 165)—mention human sacrifice proper among the *Araucanians*, but without giving convincing evidence or details. There is a greater probability that it did not occur. (For summary and discussion of evidence, cf. McClafferty, 1932, pp. 27-29.)

## LIFE CYCLE

844 Birth.—It was taboo for an expectant mother to stand on the threshold of the hut. To give birth within the family hut was thought to bring evil upon the inmates. When travail began, the woman, accompanied by a relative or friend as midwife, retired to a temporary shelter near a stream or the sea. Delivery was in kneeling position. Midwives showed considerable skill in cases of difficult delivery, and practiced cephalotomy when they thought it indicated (Claude Joseph, 1933-34, p. 713). The umbilical cord was ordinarily cut with a flint knife (Latham, 1922 b, p. 561). Various plant medicines were used to facilitate delivery; also, recently at least, a decoction of *Datura stramonium* to deaden the pains; and during and for a while after delivery, the mother took no cold drink (Gusinde, 1936, pp. 561, 855, and *passim*).

846 The mother bathed the infant and herself in a stream or in the sea right after birth. After remaining in seclusion 8 days, or in some cases less, she returned with the child for the naming feast. At this

feast, in more recent times at least, a white lamb was sacrificed, some of its blood sprinkled in the four cardinal directions, and the rest poured into a hole in the ground where the severed umbilical cord was deposited. South of Toltén, a tree was planted at the name-giving feast of a male child. The name of a female child could not be mentioned lest she die. (On kuga names, see *supra* under Kinship, p. 723.)

Two types of cradle were used (fig. 78): a portable one, of two longitudinal arms connected with boards or else a netted frame, with bow; and a swinging "hammock" type (illustrated in: Smith, 1855, p. 213; Latcham, 1909, pls. 34-35; cf. Moesbach, 1936, pp. 186-88 for description).

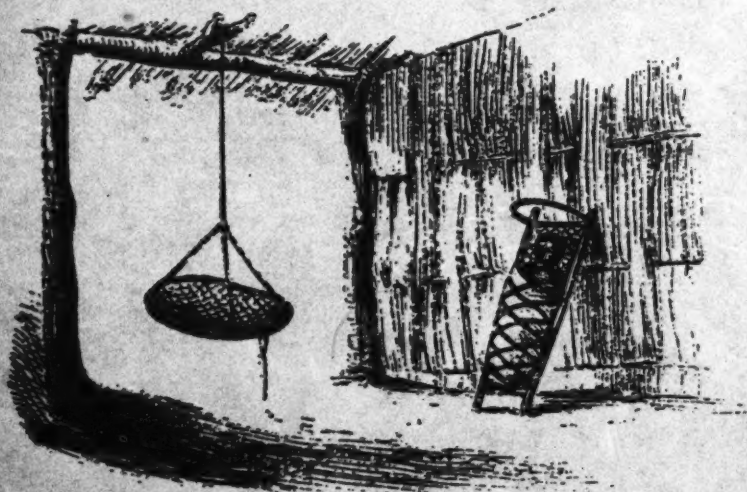


FIGURE 78.—*Mapuche* cradles. (After Smith, 1855, p. 213.)

After childbirth, cohabitation of husband with wife was not resumed until weaning, which did not take place until all the child's teeth were cut (Latcham, 1909, p. 360), or until a year after birth or, if the child was weak, 18 months or more (Claude Joseph, 1933-34, p. 713).

Both abortion and infanticide occurred, but how commonly is not clear. Gusinde (1936, *passim*) lists about a dozen different plant abortifacients. Deformed offspring and one of twins were done away with, by being thrown into the water or suffocated with mud (Guevara Silva, 1929, 2:241-42; 1908, p. 222). Félix José (1916, 1:91) lists the verb *kofum*, meaning to kill an infant and roast its testicles in a heated pot, as done sometimes by an unmarried mother to avenge herself on her unfaithful lover—so making him impotent (Guevara Silva, 1908, p. 222; 1929, 2:242). The present writer has come across no specific mention of contraceptive practices; apparently in recent

more recently, the powdered scrapings off the broken edge of an iron kettle are used. The ashes must be those of either huique or pelú. Those of pilfú must not be used as they are poisonous. This mixture "certainly dries up that oozing." 844

There is a belief, in all areas, that the umbilical cord should be saved, but the reasons for doing so, and for disposing of it, differ. Quoting an Alepúe mother: "I tied the cord of each of my children, when it fell off, into a little piece of cloth and put it somewhere in the ruka. The most recent ones I kept there [on a nail of a rafter in a corner of the ruka] and there [on a shelf attached to the side of the ruka]. The cord must never be thrown out of the ruka. If it is, the child will always have fear within itself, and that without reason. Without thinking of what I was doing, I threw the cord of one of my daughters out-of-doors after it had been lying on the rafters for a while. Consequently she has always had fear in herself; today, although she is 13 years old, she dislikes going out of the ruka when it is dark." A listening-in woman agreed, and added: "It causes that child to be without courage in general." Another listening-in woman had a hearty laugh when asked where the cords of her children were, and said, "I do not know where they are now; they got lost somewhere in our ruka. I kept them inside the ruka, however." 844 184 [794]

A 60-year-old Coñaripe woman had not heard of the belief of the Alepúe women. She had kept the cords of her children in the ruka because throwing them out indicates to others that the parents do not care what the child will turn out to be.

According to Panguipulli informants, the cord today is thrown into running water, such as a creek or brook. Formerly it was wrapped up in a small piece of cloth and stored under the rafters. Doing this gave the child courage, even the courage to climb tall trees. Informants had not heard of anyone burying a cord, or of undesirable consequences if it were thrown into the fire. "I certainly never heard that throwing it into the fire would make a child poke at fires," a belief held by the Chippewa. When told of the Arapaho custom of sewing the cord into a beaded bag and owning it as an adult, a woman remarked, "Why go through so much trouble and why save those things so long?"

#### SECUNDINES, PLACENTA, CAUL

After the child is born, the midwife or the mother's mother cleans it, swaddles it in a piece of homewoven woolen cloth, and ties it to its cradle. In the meantime another woman, or the woman's husband, if everyone else is busy, makes the mother gag by pushing two fingers 846●

●846 down her throat—this will cause her to eject the placenta. If gagging is not effective, she is made to vomit by giving her a large drink of lukewarm water mixed with salt and urine.

[84] The secundines, including the placenta, are "companions" of the child. Immediately after delivery they are folded into the material on which the mother knelt during delivery and buried in the ruka either below the spot where the child was born or near the fireplace. This is true for all areas except Panguipulli. Usually the child's father buries them; sometimes an older sister of the child does so because the father may be busy. Several informants knew that very recently, on a few occasions, the secundines had been buried outside the ruka, "but that was taking great risks. Some harm can be expected to come to the mother; indeed, she may take very sick because of it. Or dogs may dig them up. Dogs are not allowed to eat the secundines—they are a part of man!" In Panguipulli area a boy's secundines were buried in a hole near the fireplace, but a girl's were buried out-of-doors under a chupón. It is known that dogs will not dig under a chupón because of its sharp needles.

No informant knew of an Araucanian child that had been born with a caul. "I am sure if one were so born, the midwife would tear off the skin and throw it in with the secundines. Nobody would pay any attention to it."

#### STERILIZING EYES OF NEWBORN BABY

[278] On the day of birth, or the following day, the baby's eyes are treated with the sap of a plant. Quoting a Panguipulli man: "You will not find a blind Mapuche. This is because the midwife or whoever helps a woman deliver her child squeezes the sap of a plant we call llumíelka [unidentified] \* into the child's eyes. It removes the mucus from the eye. Usually she does so immediately after the child is born, but it can be done with good effect the day following. It takes away that skin that is over the child's eye. I do not believe the Chileans use it; at least I have never heard them tell. And there are blind Chileans. The plant grows in damp ground."

\* When translated, llumíelka means to keep from being a blind person. The writer was unable to identify the plant under that name. An Araucanian teacher in Cofaripe identified a specimen the Panguipulli informant brought as korekore. Félix José (1916, vol. 1, p. 95) gives the botanical classification of korekore as *Geranium corcove* Stend., fam. Geraniaceae, and the Spanish equivalent as corecore. In *La salud por medio de las plantas medicinales* (Anonymous, 1929) corecore is classified as *Geranium bertierianum*.

## FONTANELS, HEAD SHAPING, BEAUTIFYING THE FACE

Until the fontanelles have closed, the baby's head must be protected <sup>846</sup> from the wind, which, it is believed, will blow through the fontanelles and give the baby difficulty in breathing. Formerly the soft moss found between stocks of old quila was put around the baby's head in caplike fashion. "That moss was soft and dense. A mother collected it and had it on hand when her baby was born. It is difficult today to find any of it—forest fires have destroyed all the old quila. Anyway, today the baby's head is covered with an infant's cap."

The child's physical and mental development is associated with the closing of the fontanelles. If they have not closed by the time the child walks, parents fear that the child will be weakminded, that it will have difficulty in walking, or may not learn to walk at all. <sup>856</sup>

According to an educated Araucanian, the true Araucanian face is round; one not round is always a mestizo, he insisted—a statement to which not all Araucanians would subscribe. A round face, however, is considered a beautiful one by an Araucanian mother. In Panguipulli and Cofaripe areas a mother massages her baby's face to round it whenever she gives it care or nurses or fondles it. An informant showed the manner in which this was done. She moved the fingertips of both hands simultaneously from jaw to front of ears; then from bridge of nose along cheek bones; next from middle of forehead toward temples; and then downward along the ridge of the nose. "But the mother must do it tenderly, for the bones of the baby's head are very soft," she added. When the baby sleeps, the mother will push its cheeks upward with her fingertips and tie little boards over the cheeks to keep them in this position. When asked if the face of a boy, too, was so treated to beautify it, she retorted, "Most certainly it was; more so than a girl's. It is the boys who as men will be the progenitors of the human race."

The mother also shapes the head bones of her baby with her hands; in some instances she ties little boards to its head to round it. She will train its back to be straight by tying it to its cradleboard, but in doing so will allow freedom of movement for its head. However, if the head bulges in the occipital region, she will tie a little board there while the baby is asleep. "That is why the Mapoche have nicely formed heads. The heads of Chileans often bulge in the back." <sup>[304]</sup>

In all probability it is correct to speak of an "Araucanian nose"—that is, a nose shaped to resemble the beak of the bandurria. The bandurria's beak is long and ends in a graceful dip. Quoting a Cofaripe mother: "The mother often pulls the baby's nose downward" <sup>[42]</sup>

- 846 like this [running her thumb and first finger down the ridge of the nose and then stretching the nostrils wide open with the fingers]. She says to the child, 'You must have a nice nose like the bandurria.' "

Babies are often born with a dense growth of lanugo on forehead and sides of face, from temples to ear lobes. By the time the child enters school, it has disappeared, but a low hairline, a characteristic of Araucanians in all areas—one not desired by them—remains. (Cf. p. 61.)

#### THE MOTHER'S BATH, THE BABY'S BATH

For a few hours following delivery—probably two—the mother lies quietly on her back, "she must not stir in the least." Then she walks to the family's bathing place, either a river or lake or the Pacific, and there wades directly into deep water. "This brings about good blood circulation." "All the Mapuche women in Cofaripe still do that," said a non-Araucanian herbalist. "Chileans around here say these women are crazy, but the Mapuche women say that they feel better if they take this cold bath."

In many instances still the midwife, or one of the other women who was present at the delivery, dips the infant into the water where the mother is taking her bath. "This bath hardens the child to the hardships of life," said a mother. "It trains the child early to physical endurance. Formerly the Mapuche could resist sickness; they were a strong people because of it. Where they are no longer given this bath after birth, the Mapuche are a weak people." No informant knew of an instance where the mother while bathing herself bathed her child, also, in a stream or in the sea after birth. "Maybe it was done a long, long time ago." Cooper's sources say it was (1946, p. 732).

Today a substitute for the baby's first bath in a body of cold water is dipping the infant into a dish of cold water or, as the Chileans do, laying it on one's lap and dashing cold water on its back and front. The midwife or one of the women who has attended the birth will do so. Generally fresh cold water is used; rarely, a decoction. The belief prevails that the cold bath is conducive to the child's good health and well-being. The dish used is one carved from a tree trunk.

The mother bathes the child frequently during infancy and childhood; many do so daily. It is dipped into a body of water, if one is near the home, or it is stood up in a dish in the *ruka* and cold water is splashed against it. An occasional mother today uses lukewarm water or a decoction, something she learned from non-Araucanians.

A Cofaripe mother had seen a non-Araucanian mother bathe a child

in an herbal decoction. Not knowing its ingredients she gave her babies an herbal bath daily in a decoction of leaves of *limpia plata*, bark of apple tree, and either the bark of *canelo* or the leaves of *boldo*. She believed these to be soothing and a preventive of rashes. She boiled a pinch of each in water for some time, then strained the decoction into a dish through a piece of cloth. The baby was seated in it, and handfuls of it were dashed against the body. "I made a fresh decoction each day. We Mapuche believe that a decoction must be used the day it is prepared."

## POSTNATAL INTERESTS

## EAR PIERCING, BODY DECORATIONS

Araucanians pierce the ears, but not the nose or the lip. One piercing is made in each ear lobe. According to old informants, every child, formerly, had its ears pierced immediately after birth; in general, today, only girls have theirs pierced. Piercing is done before the child is 3 months old, "that is, before it feels pain; we learned that from the Chileans." "My two daughters there [6 and 8 years old] have not had their ears pierced. I shall not have them pierced any more; it would be too painful."

Any person may do the piercing, but since a member of the family may be too tenderhearted, an outsider is usually asked to do so. Persons mentioned were old persons, "a man in *Mehuín* who always does it for children there," "a man we know well who passed by our *ruka* and I called him in," "I myself," and neighbors.

Formerly ear lobes were rubbed well with ashes and then pierced with the sharp point of a bone. It was believed the ashes would anesthetize the ear lobe. Old persons still rub the lobes with ashes, but piercing today is done with a threaded needle, a piece of the thread being left in the hole to keep it from growing shut. The ends of the thread are tied to form a loop. Anyone fondling the baby will pull the thread back and forth. "I saw an old man do that recently to a little girl on his lap." An ear could be pierced from either the upper or the lower side of the lobe. Non-Araucanians had seen a bar of soap held under the lobe, and the lobe pierced with a threaded needle with a quick movement from top downward. The needle had been held in the fire to sterilize it.

When the piercing is well healed, the thread is pulled out and a small earring inserted. Earrings are increased in size as the child grows older. "We give our girls earrings today to retain our customs."

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[30]

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placenta, also. And that is what we could have done for these two women, and they might have lived." 845

NAVEL CORD

The attending woman ties off the umbilical cord with a thread and severs the cord beyond this. The navel is given no treatment. Informants agreed that the cord was kept by the mother, after it fell off, but they differed as to its disposal. Some dried the cord thoroughly, then ground it to powder, and gave a little of it in water to the child whenever the child was sick; others merely stored it with other personal things. "But with all the moving around we have had to do since they took our land from us, the ones I kept got lost." A 70-year-old man listened with interest to the Arapaho way of sewing the cord into a beaded bag (Hilger, 1952, pp. 22-23) and remarked, "That was not the custom ever around here." Today, the cord is buried inside the house near the wall. [17]

PLACENTA, CAUL

If the placenta was being ejected with difficulty, the woman was given a decoction of finely powdered root of apio boiled in chicha (fermented fruit juice), or, if no chicha was at hand, in water. In extreme cases she was given her own urine to drink, hoping that gagging would eject the placenta; if this brought no result, gagging was increased by giving her the urine of several persons present. In general, today as formerly, the placenta is buried near the wall within the house or close to the outside of it. In several instances it was known to have been discarded as refuse. [273]

Most informants had not heard of a child born with a caul; several who did were older than 60. They knew that a child so born could be expected to grow up to be an intelligent person. "That is why my son grew up to be so intelligent; but when he is intoxicated he certainly loses his intelligence; he is stupid then." The caul was dried and either stored or buried within the house, very near to the outside of it. "Such a thing you do not throw away; the good fortune of the child depends on it."

STERILIZING THE EYES OF THE NEWBORN BABY

Usually the milk of the baby's mother is dropped into the baby's eyes, "so that it will not have sore eyes." Occasionally today aniline dye is used. 846

## THE MOTHER'S BATH, THE BABY'S BATH

Formerly, immediately following delivery the mother took her child to a stream where, holding the child, she walked into the cold water, if need be breaking thin ice to do so. An occasional woman does so today. A non-Araucanian told of rising one morning to find her Araucanian woman servant returning, in a rather heavy snowfall, from a river where she had just taken a bath and had given one to her child, born during the night; she had to break the ice on the river to do so. The servant prepared the breakfast and went about her daily work as usual. (Customarily, the women refrained from work for three or four days following delivery.) "That happened 30 years ago [1923]," said the non-Araucanian. "But I have heard it told often since that the Araucanian women still take these cold baths and bathe their babies at the same time right after delivery." A listening-in Araucanian woman in her sixties was not of the same opinion: "That was true formerly; but most women today could not do that; they are too delicate; they would die. I know my daughters could not do it."

Old informants firmly believed that it was this first cold bath that kept the baby well and strong, and noted that none ever died from the cold bath. The first bath of most children today is one of clear lukewarm water in a large wooden dish used for household purposes. It is given immediately following birth by the woman who assists at the delivery.

## POSTNATAL INTERESTS

## EAR PIERCING

Formerly, the child's ears were pierced when it was given its name; today, generally, only a girl's ears are pierced. Noses and lips were not pierced: "Never! Never!" Usually the piercing was done within a month following birth, because it was believed the child felt no pain in its ear lobes at that age and no swelling resulted; if the child was much older, its ear lobes often became sore. Sometimes, however, this was not done until the child was much older—in some instances as old as 18 years.

Obviously the piercer was not a conventional person. According to some old informants it was the mother of the child who pierced the ears of her own child; according to others, just as old, any relative might do so. In general, a woman pierced a girl's ears; a man, a boy's.

Piercing was done in the ear lobe from top downward with a sewing needle, "or something like a needle—we used to have a needleless implement of silver around."

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593 ment to people of her husband's group. This period is much easier for her if she has real or classificatory sisters living on her husband's reservation or nearby. It is, however, the time when her husband, although perhaps most demonstratively affectionate to her, actually has least in common with her. Young husbands seem to yield their bachelor freedom with reluctance, and while sagacious wives are not supposed to upbraid them for this, they complain that the earliest years of marriage are least satisfying.

[851] After the birth of the first child a woman has much to busy her and to comfort her. It is at this time that she feels more at ease in her husband's natal community.

[521] A man derives much satisfaction from the companionship of his wife. It is common for a man to call his wife by the Araucanized term *kompai* (*compañero-a*). During leisure hours, at mealtimes, and often long into the night a man and woman carry on almost endless conversations, exchanging news and gossip, talking about their children and relatives, planning the next day's activities and social visits, and the like.

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851 A woman is apparently more submissive to her husband's authority before the birth of children. Once a child has been born to the couple, the wife's position in the household is enhanced since it is she who assumes the major role in the care and control of the infant. This is not to say that there comes about a balance of authority, but the woman firmly establishes herself in the highly respected role of mother, which entitles her to privileges she would not otherwise be able to acquire and strengthens her relationship with her husband's lineage.

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855 When a child is born it is wholly welcomed by the parents, who dote on it. As far as my observations go, older children are generally gleeful about the new arrival. At least this was the case in two households in which I lived where children were born during my stay, and it seems not to have been contradicted by the other instances I was able to observe.

854 Although there is some sharing of responsibilities for the care and comfort of the infant by both parents, as well as by some of the older children, it is the mother who plays the major role in direct satisfaction of its needs. In consideration for the mother's extra labors, the husband is likely to shoulder some of the domestic chores such as providing wood for the ever-going fire, fetching water, tending to the cook pot, and the like. If there are other children capable of per-

forming these chores, the father will delegate them according to ability, sex, and age qualifications, or else the mother will direct the household management from her bed. In any case, a husband tends to relieve his wife of major duties during accouchement. Sometimes husbands make a cradle for the newborn child, although this is usually done in anticipation several months before delivery. Rattles and gewgaws might also be made by the father or other members of the household, as well as by friends and relatives who visit to see the baby and congratulate the parents. 846  
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A man seems to enjoy crooning to his newborn child and spends a good deal of his leisure time caressing it and holding it after the mother has returned to her normal household routine. Parents are quite patient with children, rarely speaking harshly to them or slapping them. While there is variation in handling children who are older, treatment of small babies seems to be uniformly gentle, if not consistently affectionate. Both father and mother take turns soothing a squalling infant. As long as there are infants in the household, a father is necessarily involved in such activities. I saw an instance in which a man soothed three toddlers at once each night during the two months I was a guest in his house. Not only did he demonstrate utmost patience, but he attempted to tell them instructive stories all the while—little of which I am sure they were able to understand. 854  
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So much attention is given infants and they are caressed so openly that it seems not unreasonable to think that the display of affection toward them is an outlet for the traditionally suppressed feelings between husband and wife which characterize all but the first months or earliest years of most marriages. The relationship between husband and wife surely alters perceptibly after children are born and companionship replaces the afore-mentioned romantic and otherwise atypical behavior, such as holding hands and singing love songs. 593  
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As the family increases, so does the mother's status within it. This depends on her importance in caring for the younger children and training them in the tasks they will perform during childhood and early adolescence. The husband openly recognizes his wife's importance in these matters, which reaffirms the cooperative relationship that is the keystone of family structure. Socialization, practical education, the channeling of anger, envy, possessiveness, and so forth devolve mainly upon the mother during the period when her children are young. She mediates to a great extent the attitudes and 593  
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THE DOMESTIC GROUP

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The husband has little assistance to lend at this time, and may even be told to leave the house during parturition. If there are children present, they will be chased out of the house. Only if labor is very difficult will the husband be asked to assist, usually by pressing on his wife's abdomen to force the birth. It also happens that an older, more experienced relative might be called upon to do this. In any event, there is a tense atmosphere, especially during a difficult birth. The woman is the focus of attention and the delivery is surrounded by secrecy. The father's interest in both wife and child is heightened. The woman proves herself to the community and both she and her husband exude feelings of warmth, pride, and self-congratulation. To a large extent these are shared by other residents who visit the mother and view the child during the next few weeks. Gifts are invariably brought, and in being reciprocated establish informal bonds of friendship which might not have existed before the birth of the child.

The husband's major participation is in burying the afterbirth, a traditional obligation. He must scrape up all the residue and the blanket or sheepskin used in the accouchement, disposing of them some distance from the *ruka*. Methods of disposal vary. Where fear of witchcraft is especially strong, however, disposal is more guarded and elaborately conceived. The husband might take the afterbirth to a deserted and unfrequented spot in the woods, swamp, hilltop, or other out-of-the-way place to bury it along with the bedding and soiled garments. Sometimes the afterbirth is thrown into a stream and the garments washed and reused. Since this duty devolves upon the husband, it is primarily the extent to which he is concerned with witchcraft that seems to determine how the matter is disposed of. In describing their role on these occasions, some men maintain that they have really broken with tradition and no longer fear the machinations of sorcerers, but have to comply with traditional concepts of disposal of the afterbirth so as not to arouse too great anxiety among the more conservative members of their family and kingroup.

Soon after birth the parents name the child without ceremony. Boys ideally receive another name when they are about five years old. This is ceremonially bestowed, in a simple ritual called *lakutun*, since the name is bestowed by the paternal grandfather or someone who stands in his place — that is, another elder of the lineage. The naming ceremony involves a feast and drinking bout to which relatives and friends are invited. The naming day is celebrated annually.

this situation from firsthand knowledge, since in the polygynous households I knew there was usually such discrepancy between the youngest, most attractive woman and the other wives that favoritism toward the younger seemed not to disturb the others. The important thing in all situations of this sort seems to have been the ability of the polygynist to show equal attention to all wives in regard to the distribution of food, clothing, and other necessary and luxury goods. There quite possibly was an additional factor involved in the inheritance due to the sons of the older women, although my knowledge of this matter is too sketchy to permit generalization.

I was able to discover almost nothing about the status of the children of the several wives in polygynous households. If one wife dies in childbirth or while she is still suckling her infant, the other wives will take turns caring for the child, those lactating also giving it the breast. Apparently this is not done willingly, but at the command of the polygynist, who emphasizes the moral obligation the surviving wives owe to his heir.

A child soon comes to know its own mother. This results from the care she gives it and because she is the one who orders it about the household. As soon as the child is able to walk it begins performing small chores for its actual mother. If the polygynous family shares a common dwelling (as was the case in two situations I observed), the mother takes her children with her whenever she leaves the house. If her work outside the house, in the garden or fields, prevents her from taking an infant with her, another woman assumes the responsibility for its care — again a moral responsibility enforced by the husband. A child distinguishes between "own mother" (*ñuke*) and "other mother" (*kañuke*) in a polygynous household. Own mother may also be called *ñoño*, a special term of endearment.

One thing that struck me as significant is that few grown sons and daughters were in evidence, although there were always small children. I was told that the young women who had not married had left the reservation for employment in Chilean towns, and that most of the young men had done likewise. Some of the grown sons had married uxorilocally, for the usual reason that by doing so they obtained access to adequate land. In each household there was at least one adult son of the polygynist. Although these sons were of nubile age none had any plans for marriage while their father lived. They were usually but not always sons of the primary wife. It was asserted that none of the sons would inherit any of his father's wives through mar-

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